



2013 Clean Water Indiana Watershed Grant Program

Indiana State Department of Agriculture
State Soil Conservation Board

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC 14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to support Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in efforts to **reduce sediment and nutrients** from nonpoint sources to help improve water quality. The State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) is accepting competitive proposals for multi-district, multi-year watershed projects. Project proposals can be for up to three years in length and up to \$75,000. Grant funding can be used to help support one or more of the funding categories listed below:

- Cost Share Incentives/On Farm Demonstrations
- Increase Direct Technical/Professional Assistance to Land users
- Adult Education (see additional info on page 4)

General Grant Guidance:

- Two or more districts must be actively involved in the watershed based project/initiative proposed. A lead district must be selected to serve as the grantee to receive and administer the grant. However, grant funds can be shared between the districts through cooperative agreements developed locally.
- The grant proposal must document how the grant funds will address at least two of the State priorities in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2010 and identified as follows:
 - **Soil Quality Degradation** which includes the loss of top soil due to erosion, the depletion of organic matter, as well as soil compaction and other soil biology impacts that degrade soil quality.
 - **Water Quality Impairments** including sediment, nutrients, and/or pesticides.
- Proposals that support current state and/or national initiatives are strongly encouraged. Examples of state and national priority initiatives include: projects/programs to reduce sediment and nutrient loading into the Gulf of Mexico (MRBI) and the Great Lakes (WLEB and GLRI). Current examples of initiatives partially assisted with Clean Water Indiana funding include the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). Proposals for On Farm Network® activities will not be funded due to current availability of funding through other sources. However, funding for projects that will be used in conjunction with OFN will be considered. Example: Cost share for cover crops on acres currently enrolled in OFN are eligible.
- Proposals that outline how the CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. CWI project proposals that will be in tandem with ongoing projects are encouraged. Example: CWI funds might be used to add technical assistance to help implement sediment and nutrient reduction practices cost-shared through a LARE or 319 project.

- Proposals relating to water usage/conservation (irrigation management) will only be considered if water quality project and conservation practices offered in it will also reduce sediment and nutrient reduction.
- Research projects, including water quality monitoring, are not eligible under the 2013 CWI grant program.
- Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrients are eligible; however, no funding will be awarded for cost share on rain barrels. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity or individual is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. For example, CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes “above and beyond” the requirements outlined in the MS4 permit’s Storm Water Quality Management Plan.

Applicants should consider the ratio of BMP cost to load reduction and make judicious use of their limited grant funding.

Application Process: Application forms are available from your District Support Specialist. Applications are in a fillable PDF format which can be saved to your computer and electronically submitted to your District Support Specialist as an email attachment.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by September 28, 2012. By electronically submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies each partnering district has agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Eligible Applicants: The multi-district, watershed based applications may be submitted by any SWCD in the State of Indiana. However, only one application is permitted per project and must be submitted by the designated lead SWCD. All participating districts must be geographically contiguous as to provide the greatest impact to the watershed. **All participating SWCDs must be current on reporting.** Please note: Future Clean Water Indiana funding to expand or extend projects/initiatives awarded under this grant cycle will not be available to awarded watershed projects until the final year of the grant and only if progress has been documented on grant report form and the need for additional funds is justified at that time. While districts may participate in more than one CWI Watershed grant, districts may only administer one grant at a time. However, exceptions for unusual circumstances and exceptionally strong proposals may be considered.

Project Description: The size and number of the targeted watershed(s) shall be determined at the local level. The selected watershed(s) shall encompass lands located within at least two districts. The proposal must identify the current non-point source water quality concerns in the selected watershed(s). If the watershed(s) selected is/are included in an existing Watershed Management Plan or one currently under development, please include the name of the plan and identify who developed it or is developing it.

Partnerships: SWCDs **must** partner with at least one other district and are encouraged to partner with other organizations. Each application must state clearly what each partner (particularly partner district(s)) will be contributing to the proposed project in the grant application (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.).

Funds Available: Each applicant will be given the opportunity to apply for funding under one or all of the grant funding categories. Please see the **Grant Funding Categories with Descriptions** on the next page for additional information. Please note this grant opportunity will be competitive. The SSCB is looking for proposals up to \$75,000 over three years, however additional funding considerations will be made for exceptionally strong proposals. The SSCB will utilize a score sheet criteria to aid in ranking the proposals.

Match Requirement: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project.

Project Dates: All 2013 Clean Water Indiana Grant Watershed projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects may start on January 1, 2013 and must be finished by December 31, 2015.

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or district self-promotional materials (examples include mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc). **NOTE: Districts with past due reports on CWI Grants will not be eligible to apply for additional CWI Grants until past due grant reports are submitted.**

Leveraging Funds: SWCD's are encouraged to partner with traditional and non-traditional organizations/agencies at the local, state and federal level to leverage additional dollars for their project/initiative. However, the SSCB will show preference to projects which do not add to the percent cost share/incentive rate offered through another program.

Process of Payments: Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) will issue a contract to the designated lead SWCD. SWCDs should return their signed contract to ISDA within 14 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Districts will receive 75 percent of their grant funding up front and the remaining 25 percent at the end of the project, upon receipt of the final report.

Reporting Requirements: Annual reports through SharePoint will be required for the duration of the grant project and a final report will be due at the end of the grant period. This report must summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. Tracking of conservation practice implementation must be reported through SharePoint's conservation practices tracking system

Grant Funding Categories with Descriptions:

Cost-Share/Incentives/Demonstrations: Practices and measures must be focused on the reduction of sediment and nutrients for the proposed watershed(s). Districts are encouraged to provide matching dollars and to leverage additional dollars from other sources. Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. Districts also have the ability to assist in the purchase/lease or off-set of rental costs for equipment to encourage new technology adoption. Districts may also want to offer financial assistance for demonstration projects or farm comparison plots to demonstrate and evaluate options for reducing erosion and /or nutrient inputs or adoption of new equipment technologies. The SSCB will show preference to projects that are not fundable by other programs, or which do not add to the percent cost share/incentive rate offered through another program.

Direct Agronomic, Technical and Conservation Program Participation Assistance: Funding under this category is for the purpose of increasing the amount of direct agronomic, technical and conservation program planning/participation assistance to land users in the target watershed(s) that are willing to adopt best management practices and technologies for sediment and nutrient reduction. The BMP should address the goal(s) of the watershed management plan and be appropriate for the nonpoint source pollution in the critical area where the project site lies. For example, even within a critical area, it would not be wise to place a BMP where runoff already infiltrates and has little chance of reaching a Water of

the State. Furthermore, CWI grant funds shall not fund BMPs that are “bandages”, or spot fixes of much larger issues. For example, stabilizing streambanks without first addressing the source of the extra flow and sediment causing the bank instability is not a high value project or a funding priority. Examples of how funding in this category might be used include:

- **Contracted Services** – Funding under this category may be used for contracts or fee based agreements with individuals, firms, organizations or project partners who can provide additional on-site agronomic and/or other technical assistance to land users to help them plan and implement best management practices and technologies that will reduce erosion and sedimentation and/or improve nutrient management. This may include helping land users understand what conservation program assistance is available to address these resource concerns and helping them apply for conservation program assistance.
- **Matching Funds for Additional Professional Assistance** –Funding in this category may also be used as match to help partnering districts acquire additional personnel to provide the types of professional assistance described above on a watershed wide basis. Examples include but are not limited to: Watershed Technician, Watershed Agronomist, Conservation Program Specialist (agriculture or urban), and Conservation Cropping Systems Specialists.

Adult Education—Districts may apply for up to \$1,500 per year to support Adult Education activities, events/ workshops, etc that help with implementation of the watershed based multi-district project/initiative proposed. However, grants will not be awarded for Adult Education only.

Questions? Please contact your District Support Specialist. See DSS Map and contact information under documents on SWCD SharePoint Site.